December 23, 2016

Electronically Filed: FERC eFiling

Honorable Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20426

Preliminary Permit Application for Chugach Electric Association, Inc. – Snow River Project

Dear Secretary Bose:

Chugach Electric Association, Inc. (Chugach) applies to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a preliminary permit for the proposed Snow River Hydroelectric Project (Snow River Project), as described in the attached exhibits. This application is made in order that Chugach may secure and maintain priority of application for a license for the project under Part I of the Federal Power Act while obtaining the data and performing the acts required to determine the feasibility of the project and to support an application for a license for the Snow River Project.

If there are any questions with regard to this application, please contact Michael Brodie at 907-762-4835 or mike_brodie@chugachelectric.com.

Sincerely:

[Signature]

Paul Risse
Senior Vice President Production and Engineering
5601 Electron Drive
Anchorage, AK 99518
(907) 563-7494

cc:

Regional Director (Certified Mail: 7015 0640 0007 2070 2232)
Portland Regional Office
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
805 SW Broadway
Fox Tower - Suite 550
Portland, OR 97205

Alaska State Director (Certified Mail: 7011 2000 0000 3608 6619)
Bureau of Land Management
Division of Lands and Renewable Resources (AK932)
Attn: FERC Withdrawal Recordation
222 West 7th Avenue
Number 13
Anchorage, AK 99513-7599
BEFORE THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

APPLICATION FOR PRELIMINARY PERMIT

SNOW RIVER PROJECT

PROJECT NO. ________

CHUGACH ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
5601 ELECTRON DRIVE
ANCHORAGE, AK 99518

(907) 563-7494

DECEMBER 23, 2016
VERIFICATION STATEMENT

This application for preliminary permit is executed in

State of: Alaska

Borough of: Kenai Peninsula

By: Paul Risse
Chugach Electric Association, Inc.
5601 Electron Drive
Anchorage, AK 99518

Being duly sworn, deposes and says that the contents of this application are true to the best of his knowledge or belief. The undersigned applicant has signed the application this

23 day of Dec 2016.

Chugach Electric Association, Inc.
5601 Electron Drive
Anchorage, AK 99518

Applicant
By: Paul Risse
Senior Vice President Production and Engineering
Chugach Electric Association, Inc.

Subscribed and sworn before me, a Notary Public of the State of Alaska, this 23rd
day of Dec 2016.

/SEAL/

(Notary Public in and of Alaska)

My Commission expires: Jan 19, 2019
BEFORE THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Application for Preliminary Permit

Initial Statement

(1) Chugach Electric Association, Inc. (Chugach) applies to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) for a preliminary permit for the proposed Snow River Project (Project), as described in the attached exhibits. This application is made in order that Chugach may secure and maintain priority of application for a license for the Project under Part I of the Federal Power Act while obtaining the data and performing the acts required to determine the feasibility of the Project and to support an application for a license.

(2) The location of the proposed Project is:

State or territory: Alaska
County: Kenai Peninsula Borough
Township or nearby town: The Town of Moose Pass, Alaska is located approximately 18 miles to the north, and the City of Seward, Alaska is located approximately 15 miles to the south.
Stream or other body of water: Snow River

(3) The exact name, business address, and telephone number of the applicant are:

Chugach Electric Association, Inc.
5601 Electron Drive
Anchorage, AK 99518
(907) 563-7494

The exact name and business address of each person authorized to act as agent for the applicant in this application are:

Paul Risse
Senior Vice President Production and Eng
5601 Electron Drive
Anchorage, AK 99518
(907) 563-7494

Michael Brodie
Manager Environmental Engineering
5601 Electron Drive
Anchorage, AK 99518
(907) 563-7494

(4) Chugach is a domestic corporation and is not claiming preference under section 7(a) of the Federal Power Act.

(5) The proposed term of the requested permit is 36 months.

(6) There is no existing dam or other project facility at the proposed project location.
SECTION 4.32(a) INFORMATION

1. Identification of persons, associations, domestic corporations, municipalities, or states that have or intend to obtain and will maintain any proprietary right necessary to construct, operate, or maintain the project:

The Applicant, intends to obtain and will maintain any proprietary rights necessary to construct, operate, and maintain the licensed project.

2. Identify:

i. Every county in which any part of the project, and any Federal facilities that would be used by the project, would be located.

   Kenai Peninsula Borough
   144 North Binkley Street
   Soldotna, Alaska 99669

ii. Every city, town, or similar local political subdivision:

   A. In which any part of the project, and any Federal facilities that would be used by the project, would be located.

      Political subdivision: None.

   B. That has a population of 5,000 or more people and is located within 15 miles of the project dam.

      There are no cities, towns or similar subdivisions of 5,000 people or more within a 15-mile radius of the Project dam. The unincorporated town of Moose Pass, population 219 (2010) lies approximately 18 miles north of the Project dam. The City of Seward, AK 2,528 (2014) lies approximately 15 miles south of the Project dam.

      Contact information for the cities and townships within 15 miles of the Project are:

      City of Seward
      P.O. Box 167
      410 Adams Street City Hall Building
      Seward, Alaska 99664

iii. Every irrigation, drainage, or special purpose subdivision of interest:

   A. In which any part of the project, and any Federal facilities that would be used by the project, would be located; or

   B. That owns, operates, maintains or uses any project facilities or any Federal facilities that would be used by the project.

      None
iv. Every other political subdivision in the general area of the project that there is a reason to believe they would likely be interested in, or affected by, the application.

Moose Pass Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 147
Moose Pass, AK 99631

v. All Indian tribes that may be affected by the project.

The Applicant has identified the following Indian tribes that may be affected by the project:

CIRI (Cook Inlet Region, Inc.)
Box 93330
Anchorage, AK 99509

Kenaitze Indian Tribe
P.O. Box 988
150 N. Willow St.
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Chugach Alaska Corporation
3800 Centerpoint Drive, Ste. 1200
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Exhibit 1: Project Description

The proposed Project would be a hydroelectric generation project located in the Snow River Basin on the Kenai Peninsula, approximately 15 miles north of Seward, Alaska (see Exhibit 3 for location map). It would utilize water from the mainstem of Snow River captured at a proposed dam site located at approximate River Mile (RM) 9 upstream from the confluence of the Snow River with Kenai Lake. The proposed dam would span the Snow River approximately 3 miles above the confluence of the mainstem Snow River and the South Fork Snow River and divert water through a combination tunnel and penstock to three 25 MW turbine units housed in an approximate 8000-square foot powerhouse building. The Project would have an estimated installed capacity of 70.9 megawatts (MW) and a total estimated annual generation of 341,433 megawatt-hours (MW-hrs). A transmission line would be constructed from the powerhouse to an interconnection point with the existing high voltage transmission line located west of the proposed powerhouse location.

The Snow River watershed includes approximately 111 square-miles upstream of the proposed dam site. A map showing the general locations of proposed Project features, including the reservoir, is provided in Exhibit 4. A larger scale map of the dam and power production related facilities is shown in Exhibit 5.

Chugach is proposing a main dam and two saddle dams with crest elevation of 1,300 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL) with dam freeboard of 20 feet, which would create a reservoir with a maximum surface elevation of 1,280 feet MSL, with a surface area of 5,321 acres. At this time, Chugach is evaluating two distinct intake/tunnel/penstock/powerhouse/transmission line/access road alternatives, as shown in Exhibit 4, beginning at either the right (Alternative 1) or left (Alternative 2) dam abutments, looking downstream. Chugach anticipates selecting a preferred alignment during the preliminary permit term. The types of conveyance features for both right bank and left bank alternatives are similar and consist of an intake structure leading to a power tunnel that transitions to a surface penstock leading to a surface powerhouse on the bank of the Snow River. Water would then discharge back directly into the river below the powerhouse.

Alternative 1 starts at the right abutment and consists of a dam and an upstream intake structure that diverts flow into a gently inclined westerly tunnel beneath a high mountain ridge. The tunnel intake portal elevation is positioned above the river thalweg at approximately 1,100 feet elevation. The tunnel passes beneath the mountain and daylighted at approximately 820 feet elevation, transitioning to a surface penstock that traverses downslope to a river-level powerhouse at approximately 550 feet elevation. A short access road would be constructed from the tunnel portal down to the powerhouse. The access road would then leave the powerhouse and gently traverse the sidehill to a point coincident with the existing railroad bridge crossing. A proposed new powerhouse access road bridge would be constructed parallel with the railroad bridge and terminate at Seward Highway. The transmission line parallels the road from the powerhouse, then extends past Seward Highway upslope to interconnect with the existing high voltage transmission line on the hillside. For this alternative, the main dam construction access road would consist of the access road described in Alternative 2.
Alternative 2 starts on the left abutment upstream of the dam. Water is diverted into a conveyance tunnel intake portal positioned at approximately elevation 1,100 feet. The conveyance tunnel would pass beneath the existing left bank bedrock ridge with a vertical gateshaft positioned on the ridgetop for hydraulic control. Downstream of the gateshaft, the tunnel would continue on to a surface portal at approximately 870 feet elevation where the conveyance would transition to a surface penstock. The penstock would be routed downhill to the powerhouse at approximately 640 feet elevation. The access road would traverse from the upstream dam area over the ridge and down to the powerhouse. The access road would then leave the powerhouse and traverse the sidehill above the river floodplain, then cross the South Branch Snow River via a new bridge to interconnect with the Seward Highway. The transmission line would parallel the access road to Seward Highway, then traverse directly uphill to interconnect to the existing transmission line.

The upper highland areas on both the left and right banks away from the dam abutments have undulating, glacially-scoured bench features that will require one or more low auxiliary dam(s) designed to contain the full reservoir with 20 feet of freeboard. The auxiliary dam concepts are shown on Exhibits 4 and 5.

The concept for the Project spillway is to route flood or ice dam flows through a bedrock notch on the left side of the drainage, well away from the dam, into a tributary drainage that exits toward the Snow River from the left bank auxiliary dam area. This is intended to accommodate the full ice dam release from the basin upstream. The spillway and downstream flow path need to be wide enough and free of obstructions to accommodate the ice dam releases without blocking. Records indicate that this ice dam forms and breaches in the fall approximately every 2 to 3 years, releasing up to 140,000 acre-feet of water over a very short period (NOAA, 2015)\(^1\). Depending on the reservoir operating protocol, the reservoir level could be managed to capture most, if not all of this inflow, but this would need to be studied in future design efforts. Sediment delivery during these events and potential loss of reservoir capacity must also be considered.

Project features and their characteristics for the proposed Project are shown in the table below.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Snow River Project – Right Abutment Alternative 1</th>
<th>Snow River Project – Left Abutment Alternative 2</th>
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<td>Top of dam elevation</td>
<td>1,300 ft</td>
<td>1,300 ft</td>
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<td>Dam composition</td>
<td>Concrete-faced rockfill dam (CFRD) or roller-compacted concrete (RCC)</td>
<td>Concrete-faced rockfill dam (CFRD) or roller-compacted concrete (RCC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum water surface elevation</td>
<td>1,280 ft</td>
<td>1,280 ft</td>
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<td>Reservoir area at max water elevation</td>
<td>5,321 acres</td>
<td>5,321 acres</td>
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<td>Reservoir storage capacity</td>
<td>489,000 ac ft</td>
<td>489,000 ac ft</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Snow River Project – Right Abutment Alternative 1</th>
<th>Snow River Project – Left Abutment Alternative 2</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gross head</strong></td>
<td>730 ft</td>
<td>640 ft</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intake elevation</strong></td>
<td>1,100 ft</td>
<td>1,100 ft</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Powerhouse elevation</strong></td>
<td>550 ft</td>
<td>640 ft</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Powerhouse dimensions</strong></td>
<td>80 ft by 100 ft</td>
<td>80 ft by 100 ft</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Powerhouse composition</strong></td>
<td>Pre-engineered metal building</td>
<td>Pre-engineered metal building</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of generating units</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unit type and rated capacity</strong></td>
<td>25 MW each</td>
<td>25 MW each</td>
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<td><strong>Maximum gross head</strong></td>
<td>730 ft</td>
<td>640 ft</td>
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<td><strong>Net head (95% of available head)</strong></td>
<td>694 ft</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated powerhouse capacity</strong></td>
<td>70.9 MW</td>
<td>70.9 MW</td>
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<td><strong>Average annual energy</strong></td>
<td>341,433 MW-hrs</td>
<td>341,433 MW-hrs</td>
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<td><strong>Tunnel length</strong></td>
<td>10,040 ft</td>
<td>3,310 ft</td>
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<td><strong>Tunnel diameter</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Penstock length</strong></td>
<td>1,410 ft</td>
<td>2,650 ft</td>
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<td><strong>Penstock diameter</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Penstock composition</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Transmission line length</strong></td>
<td>2.55 mi</td>
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<td><strong>Transmission line voltage</strong></td>
<td>69-kV</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tunnel/Dam access road length</strong></td>
<td>1,410 ft</td>
<td>12,600 ft</td>
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<td><strong>Powerhouse road length</strong></td>
<td>6,858 ft</td>
<td>8,000 ft</td>
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Most major Project features would be located on federal lands within the Chugach National Forest. Private and state lands located along Snow River downstream of the South Fork confluence may be affected by the transmission line and access road developed for the Project to connect to the existing transmission line, highway, and railroad for Project purposes. Further design efforts are needed to identify affected landowners.

The proposed Project boundary for this preliminary permit application is shown in Exhibit 6. Total acreage within the Project boundary is estimated at 16,890 acres, including 15,957 acres in federal ownership and 933 acres in non-federal ownership. A completed Form FERC-587, as shown in Exhibit 7, is being submitted to the Alaska State Director, Bureau of Land Management by copy of the cover letter to this preliminary permit application.
Exhibit 2: Proposed Study Program

The study program in support of developing a License Application would be conducted according to the Commission’s licensing regulations and in close coordination with applicable landowners and resource agencies. Field studies would be conducted for the potential program elements listed below, and all necessary and feasible measures would be taken to minimize disturbance to the environment and landscape during the study program. The estimated cost of conducting studies, investigations, tests, surveys, mapping, and of developing plans and specifications for the proposed Project during the permit term is $1,000,000. Funds would be drawn from a combination of internal and external financing sources. Power generated from the Project would be provided to retail, commercial, and wholesale customers of Chugach.

Potential Study Program Elements

Engineering and Feasibility
- Refined hydrologic analysis
- Topography/Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data gathering
- Stream gaging
- Geohazard mapping
- Geologic investigation
- Preliminary design analysis
- Transmission line and access route evaluation
- Economic analysis

Environmental Studies
- Fish species composition
- Fish habitat assessment
- Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE) species inventory
- Vegetation
- Wildlife
- Recreation
- Cultural/Alaska Native
- Aesthetics
- Socioeconomics
- Project effects analysis
Stakeholder Consultation

The following entities are potential stakeholders (i.e., agencies, non-governmental organizations [NGOs], Native Corporations, and communities) in the licensing process for the Project:

Alaska Center
Alaska Conservation Foundation
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land, and Water
Alaska Department of Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office
Alaska Fly Fishers
Alaska Railroad Corporation
American Rivers
Chugach Alaska Corporation
Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI)
Department of the Army, U.S. Army Engineer District, Alaska Regulatory Division
Kenai Peninsula Borough
Kenai River Sportfishing Association
Kenai River Watershed Foundation
Kenaitze Indian Tribe
Natural Heritage Institute
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries)
National Park Service
Trout Unlimited, Alaska Council
US Environmental Protection Agency
US Forest Service
US Fish and Wildlife Service
US Geological Survey
## Study Program Schedule

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<th>2017</th>
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<td>Q1</td>
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<td>Feasibility evaluation</td>
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<td>Initial stakeholder consultation</td>
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<td>Site reconnaissance and baseline resource assessment</td>
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<td>Prepare and file Pre-Application Document (PAD)</td>
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<td>Study planning</td>
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<td>Field studies (Year One)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional data collection as needed to augment Year 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiate preparation of Draft License Application</td>
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<td>Preliminary Permit expires</td>
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\(2\) It is anticipated that the vast majority of fieldwork would be completed in 2018, with only small-scale supplementary data collection occurring in 2019 prior to filing of the Draft License Application.
Legend

- Cities
- Project Location
- Snow River Mainstem
- Seward Highway

Snow River Hydroelectric Project
Exhibit 3: Project Location Map
Snow River Hydroelectric Project
Exhibit 5: General Locations of Proposed Dam and Power Production Related Facilities

Legend
- Project Boundary
- Snow River Reservoir (1280 ft)
- Seward Highway
- Snow River Mainstem
- Storage Dam (2A, 2B, 2C)
- Power Tunnel 1
- Powerhouse 1 Access Road
- Existing Transmission Lines
- Transmission Line 1
- Ice Mass
- Lake/Pond
- Transmission Line 2
- Penstock 1
- Penstock 2
- Power Tunnel 2
- Powerhouse 1
- Powerhouse 2
- Powerhouse 2 Access Road and Dam Construction Access Road, both Alternatives
- 20 ft contours
LAND DESCRIPTION

Public Land States
(Rectangular Survey System Lands)

1. STATE Alaska
2. FERC PROJECT NO.
3. TOWNSHIP T3N RANGE R1E MERIDIAN Seward
4. Check one:
   ____ License
   ___ Preliminary Permit
   ____ Pending
   ____ Issued

If preliminary permit is issued, give expiration date:

5. EXHIBIT SHEET NUMBERS OR LETTERS

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6. contact's name  Michael Brodie
   telephone no. (907-563-7494)
   Date submitted  December 23, 2016

This information is necessary for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to discharge its responsibilities under Section 24 of the Federal Power Act.
LAND DESCRIPTION

Public Land States
(Rectangular Survey System Lands)

1. STATE ________________________________ 2. FERC PROJECT NO. ________________________

3. TOWNSHIP T2N __________________ RANGE R2E ________ MERIDIAN ___________

4. Check one: __________ Check one: 
   License
   X Preliminary Permit

If preliminary permit is issued, give expiration date: ______________________________

5. EXHIBIT SHEET NUMBERS OR LETTERS

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6. contact's name  Michael Brodie  
   telephone no.  (907-583-7494)  
   Date submitted  December 23, 2016

This information is necessary for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to discharge its responsibilities under Section 24 of the Federal Power Act.
LAND DESCRIPTION

Public Land States
(Rectangular Survey System Lands)

1. STATE Alaska
2. FERC PROJECT NO.

3. TOWNSHIP T3N RANGE R2E MERIDIAN Seward

4. Check one:
   ____ License
   ___ Preliminary Permit
   ___ Pending
   ___ Issued

If preliminary permit is issued, give expiration date: ________________________

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LAND DESCRIPTION

Public Land States
(Rectangular Survey System Lands)

1. STATE__________________________  2. FERC PROJECT NO.______________

3. TOWNSHIP  T2N  RANGE  R1E  MERIDIAN  Seward

4. Check one:
   _____License
   _____Preliminary Permit
   _____Pending
   _____Issued

If preliminary permit is issued, give expiration date:_____________________

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6. contact's name  Michael Brodie
   telephone no.  (907-563-7494 )
   Date submitted  December 23, 2016

This information is necessary for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to discharge its responsibilities under Section 24 of the Federal Power Act.